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MAINE WINTER SPORTS CENTER RECOGNIZES CITY OF WATERVILLE AS A "HEALTHY HOMETOWN"

WATERVILLE--The City of Waterville was recently named part of the statewide L.L. Bean Healthy Hometowns program, because of its extensive collaboration establishing the new 200-acre Quarry Road Recreation Area.

"The collaboration between so many organizations to make the Quarry Road Recreation Area a reality is incredibly impressive," stated Lauren Jacobs, the Healthy Hometowns coach for Central Maine who recently visited the area for the first time.

The Healthy Hometowns program is the community development division of the Maine Winter Sports Center, which is supported with a \$1 million grant from L.L. Bean. The designation brings affordable ski and bike rentals, trails and facilities development, leadership training, and a range of outdoor recreation programs for adults and youth.

"The City of Waterville has certainly shown what can be accomplished when lots of different people come to the table," said Jacobs. "I am excited to get started working in a community that so whole-heartedly supports active, outdoor lifestyles. Healthy Hometowns should be a helpful addition to all of the great work that is already being done in Waterville."

Collaborators and supporters of Quarry Road Recreation Area currently include Central Maine Ski Club, Colby College, Harold Alfond Foundation, Inland Hospital, Kennebec Messalonskee Trails, Kennebec Savings Bank, Maine Department of Conservation, (Recreational Trails

Program), Maine Army National Guard, New England Mountain Bike Association (Central Maine Chapter), New England Nordic Skiing Association, Healthy Maine Partnerships, MaineGeneral Health, Alfond Youth Center, Oakland Schools, Sunrise Rotary Club, Waterville High School, and a number of volunteers and donors.

Matt Skehan, Director of Parks and Recreation for Waterville said, "Becoming a Healthy Hometown is good news for the city. We're happy to be part of this program, which will bring many benefits to the people who live here and help to make full use of the Quarry Road Recreation Area."

John Koons, President of the Friends of Quarry Road, a nonprofit organization that raises funds and organizes programs to support the recreation area, said he is also "very pleased that the extensive efforts of volunteers and many community organizations have resulted in this designation."

"It's an important milestone in the area's overall development," he said.

The first program to come to Central Maine as a result of Healthy Hometowns is the Arooskis Adult Nordic program, which is open to anyone 18 years or older and focuses on improving fitness and technique through a variety of outdoor pursuits.

"We use the term Nordic," says Jacobs, "to describe an active, outdoor lifestyle where cross-country skiing is just one component. Any adult interested in getting outside and getting active with friends should come join the fun."

The summer-long program in Central Maine starts June 12 and picks up again in the winter with weekly sessions. Summer sessions feature a variety of activities including running, hiking, roller skiing, and paddling. Most activities will take place at the Quarry Road Recreation Area.

Says Jacobs, "There is something for everyone and no requirement to participate in every session."

As a Healthy Hometowns affiliate, Quarry Road Recreation Area joins a network of trails facilities in the state, from Rumford to Fort Kent, and fills a gap in Central Maine. To date, 200 acres of land have been purchased, 10 kilometers of world-class trails designed and constructed, and memorable events held, from cross country ski competitions to winter carnivals and mountain biking festivals.

Other activities at Quarry Road include walking/running, kayaking, canoeing, snowshoeing, sledding, geocaching, and more.

For further information, contact Matt Skehan, Director, Parks and Recreation, City of Waterville, 680-4744, John Koons, President, Friends of Quarry Road, 872-5252, or Lauren Jacobs, Healthy Hometowns Coach, 227-8580. ###